

THE PRIVATE TUTOR

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A SERMON
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

“He that loves me not keeps not my sayings: and the word which you hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me. These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”
John 14:24-26.

ALL through this thrice-blessed chapter man cuts a very sorry figure. Whoever it is that speaks, whether it is Philip, or Judas, or Thomas, each one displays his own ignorance, either by asking an unwise question or by making a mistaken request. Yet, brethren, these apostolic men were by no means inferior persons, but so superior that we sink into insignificance in comparison with them. Jesus made them heralds of His Gospel, master-builders of His church, and if *they* displayed such ignorance, even when the Lord Jesus Christ Himself had personally spoken to them, *we* must not wonder that we are apt to blunder, neither should we despair if we find ourselves dull and slow.

If those fathers of the church so greatly needed to be taught of the Holy Ghost, how much more do we? If they could receive nothing except by the Spirit of God, how can we hope to be wise apart from His instructions? Our position should be sitting with Mary at the Master’s feet, varied with bowing into the dust before the Lord under a humble sense of our folly. The chapter before us is well watered with streams of comfort, but yet I confess it is ever a valley of humiliation to me, as I see what poor creatures even the chief of saints are when left to themselves.

But, at the same time, how wonderfully throughout this passage do we see the loving kindness of our God in condescending to the weaknesses of His people. In one verse of our text, the twenty-sixth, we have the whole Trinity at work upon the believer, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name.” There we have the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son, uniting their sacred energies for the illumination of the chosen. Each divine person seeks to make the other to be more fully known, the Son speaking what He hears from the Father, and the Spirit taking the things of the Son and revealing them to us. The whole Trinity working in us to will and to do according to the divine pleasure.

What *we* are, my brethren, is of small consequence compared with what *He* is who works all our works in us. What if we be nothing but clay, the great Potter knows how to fashion us to His praise. The great item is not what the clay is, but what the potter can make out of it. Let us not despond because of what we are by nature, but let us rejoice as we remember the wisdom and power of God who has begun a good work in us, and will not cease from His working till He has perfected His design.

Wherefore, comfort one another with these thoughts. Lie low, and be more and more teachable, yet be hopeful, for you shall be taught. Confess your own ignorance, but confide in the Lord’s power to teach you. Rest assured that even for you there is a noble destiny. God shall reveal Himself to you and in you, and you shall not only know for yourself, but shall declare to principalities and powers in the heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God.

In handling my text at this time I desire to be entirely under the power of the Spirit of God. Not with enticing words of man’s wisdom would I preach, not with the garnishing of oratory would I foolishly

dream of lending power to the omnipotent Word of God, but with all simplicity I would speak plainly that which the Holy Spirit teaches by our text.

It appears to me that there are three things here worthy of patient observation. One is, *the test of a true believer*—"He that loves me not keeps not my sayings." A second is, *the need of a true believer*—he needs to be taught of the Holy Ghost, and to have his memory refreshed by the same gracious Spirit—"He shall bring all things to your remembrance." The best disciple needs help in his understanding, and in his memory. Thirdly, let us think of *the privilege of a true believer*—"The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

I. Let us begin with THE TEST OF A TRUE BELIEVER, and let each one, consent to be tested.

Let each man put himself into the scale, that he may know his weight, for the Lord ponders the heart. He who never judges himself will perish in the judgment of the last great day.

I would draw your attention to the fact that in this passage, and elsewhere in Scripture, men are divided into two classes, and not a word is said of a neutral or intermediate class. The twenty-first verse says, "He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me." And the twenty-fourth verse says negatively, "He that loves me not keeps not my sayings."

Evidently there are two sorts of persons in that part of the world which is visited by the Gospel, he that loves Christ, and he that loves Him not. If you once hear the Gospel you can never be indifferent to it, you must either be its friend or its foe, its disciple or its opposer. If once the Lord Jesus Christ crosses the orbit of your life, you can never henceforth be neutral—you must either reject Him or receive Him, believe Him or make Him a liar. I would urge home upon each of you that simple but solemn truth, lest any person should think himself omitted from the range of my discourse. I would so spread the net that no fish may remain outside its meshes.

The Gospel must, in the nature of things, be to you who hear it either a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death. By this Gospel you shall be judged, and it shall either bring you where there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, or it shall leave you where you are condemned already because you have not believed upon the Son of God. Do not, therefore, hope to live and die as if there were no Christ. Attempt not to say, "He is nothing to me." Though you pass by the cross, and refuse to look on Christ, yet the Crucified One looks on you, and casts His shadow on your path. His blood will be upon you, either to cry out against you, as a murderer of the Son of God, or else to be your cleansing from all sin. As to the person of your Lord, it is evident that you either love Him or do not love Him—one of the two it must be. What is your condition at this hour? Sitting among the people of God in this house on this Sabbath day, are you lovers of the Lord Jesus, or are you enemies to Him?

May God bless that stroke of the winnowing fan, so that by it the chaff may be separated from the wheat.

But *the test is this, the loving of Christ*. Loving Christ is not the way of salvation—that can only be ascribed to faith, as it is written, "He that believes on me has everlasting life." But the flower which comes out of the seed of faith is love, and faith is not true faith unless it works by love, and so purifies the heart.

Observe, that *the love is personal*, "He that loves *me* not." He speaks not here of love to doctrine, but of love to Himself, "He that loves *me*." There is a personal Christ, and He is to be loved by each one of us individually. Do not think of Christ as an historic personage, who came and went away, whose memory may be dear, but who cannot personally be the object of a present love. If you are truly His disciple, and a partaker of His salvation, you love *Him*.

You realize Him as a living person, as much so as your own self, as your dear wife or your near friend, and your heart in deed and in truth is bound to Him. The tendrils of your affection must lay hold on Jesus, climbing upwards toward God by laying hold upon His Son. You may not always be able to say that you are sure that you love Him, because your agony to be right may create in you a painful

anxiety, and even a morbid jealousy as to your own sincerity. But you do love Him if you are called by His grace, and if you do not love Him, neither have you tasted of His power to save.

When I read those words just now, “He that loves me not,” I felt as if I must repeat the words of Paul, and say, “Let him be Anathema Maranatha”—cursed at the coming of the Lord, for is it not an awful thing for any heart to refuse to love Jesus? The most lovable of all beings is Jesus. It is unnatural not to love one so amiable. As streams of water naturally flow into the lowest part of the valley, so one would have thought that the condescension of Jesus for our sakes made it natural for the love of men to run towards Him and concentrate itself within Him.

Alas, our nature is now unnatural, and it is only as the Spirit of God creates a new love in the heart that we yield our love to the ever-blessed Savior. If we are not lovers of the Lord Jesus, the Spirit of all grace has not made us to know and trust Christ, for if we knew Jesus and trusted Him our heart must be wedded to Him. Christ trusted must be Christ beloved. We must love God when once the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

Judge you yourselves, then. Do you love Jesus truly and supremely? He says, “He that loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” He claims the first place in the hearts of His people. He is an all-engrossing Savior, who will never be satisfied till He has monopolized all our affections and carried our hearts away to abide with Him in the treasury above. Let it be a matter, then, of personal trial with each one of you.

Hear your risen Lord saying, “Lovest thou me?” Not to Simon alone, but to you, John, and to you, Mary, He says, “Lovest thou me?” He stands here this morning, as once He stood by the lake of Galilee, and He puts this loving inquiry to each disciple, “Lovest thou me?” Is His adorable person the object of your intense regard? Can you fall at His feet and say, “Lord, you know all things, you know that I love you! Show me what you would have me to do.”

Furthermore, as we look at this text we observe that, inasmuch as it is not always possible to gauge the emotions and the affections, *a further test is given us*, “He that loves me not keeps not my sayings.” I may know, therefore, whether I love the Lord Jesus Christ by answering this further question, Do I keep His sayings? What means this? It means, first, have we *a reverent regard for all the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ*? Do we receive them as being our standard of doctrine, and our rule of life? Remember that, in effect, all that is in the Old Testament as well as in the New must be considered to be the sayings of Christ, for He says that He came not to destroy the law, but to establish the law. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one tittle of the law shall fail. The whole record of inspiration is endorsed by Christ, and may be said to be His sayings.

Now, do you accept these sacred Scriptures as your infallible guide? Remember, the sayings of Jesus are the word of the Father. Mark how Jesus says, “The word which you hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.” I tremble as I see in this day such a trifling with the Word of God, such a haste to criticize this and question that. There are degrees of inspiration, so we are told, and if that be so, we can be sure of nothing, since we have first to decide some subtle question as to the measure of the inspiration. As well have no Bible as such a Bible.

Brethren, the Word of the Lord shall have no such treatment from me, and I trust it will not be so served by any of you, for if so, you will rob yourselves of comfort, and offer grievous disrespect to your divine Lord. I hope we can declare concerning all His sayings—“Your word was found, and I did eat it, and it was unto me as my necessary food.” More to be desired are these sayings than gold, yea, than much fine gold; they are sweeter also than honey, and the honeycomb. Did a saying come from Christ? Has Jesus set forth a truth in these Scriptures? Then it is not ours to judge, not ours to doubt, but ours to accept with implicit faith. The authority of Jesus stands to us in the stead of reasoning. We so reverence Him that we reverence His sayings as being truth itself.

To keep His sayings means, further, *to make careful storage of them in the memory*. To keep these sayings must mean to lay them up in the heart. The blessed Virgin “kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart,” and so does every Christian. “Your word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin

against you.” It is a blessed thing when we are not content to hear God’s Word on the Sabbath, but listen to its echoes every day in the week. We constantly chew the cud by meditation, and so we are nourished. We delight to know the meaning of the Word by keeping it continually before our minds. We keep the heavenly object long before the sensitive plate of our mind till it is perfectly photographed thereon, and we ourselves are changed by it from glory to glory as by the image of the Lord. Oh, brethren, unless we reverence the Word, and hoard it up as the choicest of treasures, we have no proof that we love Christ.

Further than this, to keep Christ’s sayings must mean that, having learned them and retained them in the memory, we also further keep them in the mind by *frequent contemplation*. There is a great failure in this respect, I am afraid, among many professors, but those who fervently love Jesus, and are sanctified to His service, delight to be much engaged in meditating upon the sayings of Jesus. Our earthly cares are our burden, but our heavenly thoughts are our rest. What are human sciences but glimpses at transient and shadowy things? But spiritual meditation yields us views of eternal and substantial truth.

As I walk through my house and rejoice in the comforts of my home, I say to myself, “These are only mine for a little while. God has prolonged my life up hitherto, but at any moment these visible things may melt away, and I may be where things are real, though they are now invisible.” Everything that has to do with this world is a vain show, but as for the world to come, he that has a possession therein has true riches.

Should not our thoughts go most after that which is most? Should we not give the best of our consideration to that which is best, the most of our time to that which is not of time, but of eternity? I am sure he that loves Jesus delights to think upon the choice words which fell from His lips. We sit down under His shadow, for He is to us the tree of life, and not a single leaf of His shall wither, nor the least of His sayings fall to the ground.

Still, I have no doubt that the main meaning of keeping Christ’s sayings is found in *obeying Him*. Dear friends, I do not want to say anything that will be severe, but yet I shall put to you a question which ought to alarm many professors. Did you ever spend a whole day from morning to night in distinctly and resolutely doing that which would honor Christ? I do not mean did you give up your business? Did you quit your family? Such strange conduct would not honor Jesus, but would do the reverse. But have you day after day thought and acted as if Jesus were your master, and you His servant? Is it habitual with you to say, “I will only do that which Christ would do if He were in my place? His example shall be my law. I will not be ruled by the hope of personal advantage or selfish comfort, but to me the supreme rule shall be—“What would Jesus do? What would Jesus have me to do?”

I am afraid certain professors fancy that to hold a sound creed, and to attend a faithful ministry, and to subscribe now and then to charitable objects, is about the whole of religion. But you utterly miss the mark if you judge such matters to be the chief items of godliness. The chief matter is so to love Christ that we live for Him, and honor Him by obedience to Him. We cannot serve Christ by following out our own whims. He who follows his own vagaries is a vagrant, only he who obeys Jesus is His follower.

By doing what Jesus bids us, by catching His Spirit, by seeing things in His way of seeing them, and by acting both towards man and towards God in His way of acting, we may make men see what a glorious Savior we have. We ought so to display the sweet fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives that men may be filled with admiration of our Lord. May God help us to do this, for if we do not keep our Lord’s sayings by our holy living, we have no proof that we love Christ, and if we do not love Him, then we are not His disciples.

I beg you, my fellow brethren, to apply this text to yourselves. Is the Lord Jesus revered by you as your teacher? Do you bow before the authority of His Word? Do you turn to the Bible and say of it—

*“This is the judge that ends the strife,
Where wit and reason fail”?*

Have you subjected your intellect to His teaching? The loose thinkers of the present day imagine that they may believe what they like, and think what they please. But it is not so. They do as good as say, "Our minds are our own, God shall never rule over us." But this becomes not a saint. Our Lord Jesus will be King of our entire nature, or of none of it. I claim the province of the understanding for my Lord, for it is a part of His empire which He will not leave in the hand of the enemy. We are as responsible for our beliefs as for our acts. We are never in full subordination to our Lord till we yield ourselves devoutly and reverently to His instruction, calling Him Master and Lord, because so He is!

Brethren, do you yield your whole lives to Jesus? Do you aim at perfect obedience? Do you repent your failures? Do you cry to Him daily, "my Master, mold me to Your will, for to bear Your image is my ambition. I would re-live Your life, and be Your representative on earth, even as You are my representative in heaven. Oh, that I could say, of Your Father and my Father, 'I do always the things which please Him'".

II. So far for the test of discipleship. Now, in the second place, I beg you to follow me while I speak for a minute or two upon THE NEEDS OF A TRUE BELIEVER.

The believer, though he loves his Lord truly is, nevertheless, a most necessitous person, and sadly full of wants. He does not need any better Gospel, the Lord Jesus Christ taught us the best Gospel that could be, and indeed, there can be no other. When Paul spoke of "another Gospel," he added, "which is not another; but there be some that trouble you." We desire nothing wiser, fuller, or better, than the doctrine which our Lord once delivered to the saints.

I heard of a mother speaking to her boy the other day words of truth and soberness. Her hopeful and eager son was tempted to run after certain novelties of doctrine and practice, and she said to him, "What we have heard from our minister is enough for me, for it is according to Scripture. Your father and mother have lived on this Gospel, and it has helped them through a thousand troubles, even to this day. And your dear old grandfather and grandmother lived on the same truth, and died upon it triumphantly. Therefore, hold fast by it. We have tried it and proved it, therefore do not depart from it."

That was common-sense talk. I am afraid of the new Gospel, I have not proved it, but what I have seen of its results in others makes me tremble. Let those who will, go to sea in ships of reed or of cardboard, heart-of-oak suffices for me. Such vessels have carried men to the ends of the world and home again for many years, and in these alone will I cross the ocean. Those who seek after the novelties of this conceited century seek to push their Lord from His place, that a philosopher may fill His throne. They seem to say, "Stand You back, You Galilean! You were good enough for the dark ages, but we need a brighter light for these brighter times." I return to what I said before—we need no better Gospel than that which God Himself has set forth in the person of His Son Jesus Christ.

These disciples to whom our Lord spoke did not need any better preacher, they could not imagine a better. "Never man spoke like this man." What power and authority there was in Him, and what an unction of the Holy One was upon Him. I cannot say that of you, for you, beloved friends, might often sigh for an abler preacher, and it may be that in some places where you live your Sabbaths are a bondage to you, because the pure Gospel is not declared, and the sheep are not fed. But in the case of these apostles, they could not have had a better preacher, and yet, for all that, because the Holy Spirit was not yet fully given, and was not dwelling in them, they had really learned very little.

You see the Lord Jesus Christ says of Himself, "These things have I *spoken* unto you." He does not say that He had actually *taught* them. The last words of my text are, "All things whatsoever I have *said* unto you." All that Jesus had done, if we view Him merely as a preacher, was to speak and to say, but He could not teach the heart apart from the Holy Ghost. Between Christ on earth and His disciples what a distance there was! In His condescension He came very near to them, but yet you always perceive a gulf between the wise Master and the foolish disciples. Now the Holy Ghost annihilates that distance by dwelling in us.

The best instructed of the apostles failed to understand his Lord while He merely spoke to them. Often the disciples ran away with the words which He had uttered, and dwelt upon their letter, altogether

missing their spiritual meaning. Frequently when they obtained a glimpse of the spiritual meaning, they beclouded it with some prejudice or tradition of their own, which, like smoke, obscured their vision. As to memory, they displayed but little of that faculty towards spiritual things. They were constantly forgetting what the Lord had told them, and acting in a manner directly the opposite of His precept and example.

Externally, all was provided, outward ministries of the noblest order were vouchsafed, but they needed something within them, an inward and effectual teacher, a secret and powerful remembrancer. Yea, more, they required to be caused to enjoy what they knew and remembered, they needed the Comforter to extract for them the honey of consolation from the honeycomb of doctrine. Their Lord had taught them all manner of comfortable truths, and yet He had to say to them, "Let not your heart be troubled." He had supplied them with the best arguments for courage, and yet they were afraid. They required a helper, who would make them understand the truth, remember the truth, and enjoy the truth.

And this is just what you and I stand in need of every hour, for we may sit under the most edifying preacher and remain unedified if we look to his words only. We may hear the best doctrine and yet be unable to get at it so as to receive it and feel the power of it. Truth without the Spirit of God profits not the soul.

Even if you understand, you may forget. I dare say you have often to lament that the good word slips away from you, and this is a great evil. Why do we forget? Is it not largely through ignorance and want of understanding? When a child does not understand his lesson he soon forgets it. He who does not obtain a clear view of the truth will fail to remember it, just as you soon forget a person whom you have only seen casually for a few moments, and in a dim light. We cannot easily hold in the memory that which we have not firmly grasped with the mind.

Again, we forget heavenly things because we are so occupied with worldly things, our cares, our joys, our pleasures, and our pursuits often crowd the things of God into a corner, and even tread them down with heedless fury. We forget our eternal prospects because we are thinking of our immediate interests. Our circumstances compel us to think of lower objects, but we need divine help to abide in communion with the higher matters. We need someone to bring these things to our remembrance, and to elevate us to a superior region of mind and heart.

At times we forget our Lord's sayings, and become bewildered by many afflictions. Trouble follows trouble, we go from darkness to deeper darkness in our experience, and we are so worried that we forget. When we most need the promise we are most apt to forget it. There are good solid steps all through the Slough of Despond, but when a man is passing through that horrible place he is usually so hurried and confused that he cannot see the steppingstones, but slips into the deep mire where there is no standing. It is ill for us to be in a storm and our anchor at home. The promise is admired when we do not require it, but how often is it forgotten when it would be of the utmost service. We need a prompter, a friend out of sight to suggest the proper word, or else we blunder and flounder, and do not act our parts aright. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to refresh our memories.

Sometimes, I am afraid, our memories fail us because we are not particularly anxious to recollect. Certain precepts are so contrary to the carnal mind that if we can forget them we are sure to do so. You know how easy it is in your family reading to omit parts of God's word which are too close and personal. We are afraid of the razor which cuts too close to the skin. Have you not felt of a morning when your servants have been gathered together, that you could not well read a certain passage because you had been out of temper, or unkind, or in some other way out of proper form? You feared that they would say, "Our master and the Bible do not agree."

In your own private thoughts a precept occurs to you, but you feel it convenient to ignore it because it would stand in the way of a design which you are cherishing. You intend to go through with your purpose, and therefore you shut your eyes to an inconvenient text. But if we are under the guidance of the Spirit of God, He will bring to our remembrance the duty in its proper time, and we shall bring forth our fruit in its season. It is extremely easy to be wise after folly, and to be calm after the danger is over.

We find the candle when the night is ended. We cry, “Dear me, if I had felt yesterday what I feel today, how differently I would have acted.”

We are so often a little behind the market. We lock the door after the horse is stolen. Fruit out of season is always deficient in flavor, never are the scent and the taste as perfect as in the middle of the season. Oh, that we may bring forth our fruit in its due season—patience in tribulation, courage in danger, holiness in life, and hope in death. We fail to do this because that evil nature which is in us makes us forget at the precise moment what we ought to remember. It is the office of the Holy Spirit to bring before us the sayings of Christ in their due order and time. Do you not need this?

III. Hoping to retain your prayerful attention, I proceed to notice, THE PRIVILEGE OF THE TRUE BELIEVER.

It is the true disciple’s privilege to possess in the Holy Spirit a private tutor, a prompter, and a Comforter.

The Lord Jesus says, “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things.” Christ in His sayings gave us our class book, complete and infallible, but through our dullness we need more. That young man has gone to college. He has with him all necessary books, and in them is to be found all that he will need to learn. Even thus the Lord Jesus has given us in His sayings all that we need to know. But the young man’s father wishes him to become a learned man, and therefore he engages for him a private tutor, who will teach him what the books contain. With his tutor’s help his books are of far greater use to him than before. If any passage is difficult the tutor explains it, he puts the youth into the way of reading his class books, so as to get the full value of them. Spiritually this is the office of the Holy Ghost. He finds us the key wherewith to open up the mystery which otherwise would be out of our reach.

He really teaches us. To *teach* you is a very different thing from speaking to you. A person may speak to a company of young people, and yet teach them nothing. If I am anxious to instruct a brother on any point, I do not merely speak to him, but I go over the ground carefully, set out each point distinctly, repeat my statements deliberately, and illustrate them appropriately. The Spirit of God, when He takes the child of God out of the company, and speaks privately to his heart, goes over the truth with him till it is made clear, and happily apprehended. We need to have truth opened up to the understanding, impressed upon the heart, made real to the apprehension, applied to the mind, wrought into the affections, and endeared to the soul. It is one thing to hear the Word, but it is another thing to learn the Word. It is one thing to be told, but quite another thing to be taught.

The Spirit teaches the saints, either at once or by degrees, all the truth of Christ. Some parts of that whole you will never learn, except upon a sick bed, or in deep depression of spirit, or in bereavement and adversity, while other truths will only be learned on the bright mountains of assurance and communion with God. It is the Spirit’s province to burn truth into the soul, to engrave it upon the renewed heart, and make the mind sure and certain as to what it knows. No knowledge is as sure as that which the Holy Spirit communicates to our spirit. Inward teaching is effectual teaching. A man taught of God knows, and cannot be made to question what he knows.

Time was, whenever I heard a skeptical remark, I felt wounded and somewhat shaken. I am no longer shaken by these wandering winds. There are certain things of which I am as sure of as my own existence. I have seen, tasted, and handled them, and I am past being argued out of them by those who know nothing about them. I am a lost man if the old, old Gospel is not true. There is no way of salvation for me if it be not of grace through faith in the atoning sacrifice. And as I know that I am not lost, but am surely a saved man, I know that the Word which has saved me is the truth of God.

Those who are familiar with spiritual realities defy denial. They set their inward consciousness against ten thousand skepticisms. If they cannot convince others, they are convinced themselves. We must be taught by the Spirit of God in a secret, personal, unquestionable, effectual manner. We must be made to feel the power of the truth by a spiritual inoculation with it, so that it enters into our very life, and becomes part and parcel of ourselves.

It is promised us that the Comforter will teach us *all things*—that is, all the things which Jesus said and did. Have we realized this far-reaching privilege? There is a great variety in the knowledge of Christ. Nobody need think that he will exhaust it. There is, moreover, a proportion in the things of Christ, and we need to know all that our Lord has set forth. Jesus does not teach doctrine only, though some professors crave doctrine, and doctrine alone. Jesus does not teach all practice, He teaches practice wondrously, but He also declares doctrine. Our Lord does not teach either doctrine or practice without experience, but He makes a perfect blend to our edification.

The way with some of God's people is either to have nothing but doctrine, or else nothing but practice, or else nothing but experience, and this warps and spoils them. Give yourself up to the Spirit of God, and He will teach you all things, here a little, and there a little—here a little of what you should know, there a little of what you should feel, and then again a little of what you should do.

Do remember that especially in the doing part of it, the Spirit of God must be your teacher. A lad is put apprentice to a handicraft. How does he learn it? Why, by seeing how his master does it, and by doing it himself. At first he spoils the material, and his master needs to have much patience with him, but at last practice makes perfect, and the apprentice becomes a journeyman.

The Spirit of God with wonderful condescension puts us to practice a little patience. We soon get weary of that task. Then He gives us an opportunity of producing love—love to some poor wretched waif on life's rough sea. We are apt to grow chilled by his ingratitude, and wearied with our non-success. The Holy Spirit drills us in heavenly marching till we keep step with our Lord, and men take knowledge of us that we have been with Jesus, and have learned of Him.

Brethren, you are to keep your Lord's sayings and never go beyond them, but to do this will need the private tutoring of the Holy Ghost, and you must not be satisfied unless He wakens you morning by morning, and opens your ears to hear what He has to say, bringing home to your heart and conscience the things that make you wise unto salvation.

As we need something beside this, it is a mercy that we have it. We require that our memories be strengthened. What wretched memories we have as to divine things. As I have already said, we recollect when it is too late, and thus our memories serve rather to minister to our regret than to our improvement. It should not be so, and if we will put ourselves under the teaching of the Spirit of God it shall not remain so, He will strengthen our memories spiritually.

He often brings truth to our minds—do you not find it so? While you are sitting here this morning flashes of light have been around you. Branch roads have opened up as we have proceeded—vistas of truth have rejoiced your vision. You have cried with wonder, “I never saw that before!” That is the Spirit of God. Frequently a doctrine comes home to you with the force of a new discovery. You had heard the truth before, but you had never seen it, but the Spirit brings it to your remembrance with singular vivacity and force.

He refreshes the mind by vivid recollections. He refreshes the heart by melting gratitude. I have known times when my memory of the love of Christ has made me sit down and weep for very joy. Oh, what gratitude wells up in the heart when the Holy Spirit brings all that Christ did to remembrance, and we hear Him say from His cross, “I did all this for you, what have you done for me?”

It is the Spirit's work to refresh the memory of the heart as well as the memory of the mind. Ofttimes He refreshes the memory of the conscience—not quite so pleasant an operation. I have been doing for years, wrong things without knowing them to be wrong. I have been neglecting a manifest duty for a long time, but all of a sudden that duty has been brought to my remembrance as one of the things which Jesus told me. I bless the Holy Spirit for thus sanctifying me by giving me a higher standard of holiness, and making me more particular about things which I glossed over with but slight attention. This is a part of the work of the Holy Spirit of God, to bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever He has told you.

I am sure the Spirit of God often blesses us by bringing things to the memory of our hope. Perhaps this is an odd way of putting it, for how can hope have a memory? But I mean this, that hope seems to forget that the Lord has said, “I will never leave you, nor forsake you,” Hope seems to forget that—

*“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.”*

And sometimes the Spirit of God brings all that glorious revelation of the world to come before our minds.

Have you never felt glory begun below? Have not the pearly gates seemed to stand, not ajar, but wide open, and have you not in spirit walked down the streets of gold, and worn your crown, and cast it at your Savior’s feet? Then you have said to yourself, “I can bear this pain, I can put up with these depressions and these inconveniences, for I know that there is laid up for me in heaven a crown of life that fades not away.” The Spirit of God thus brings all things to our remembrance.

I shall say no more, but pray the Spirit of God to come upon you this very day, and bring to your remembrance all things that Christ has ever said to you. There will be a mixture of sunny memories and sorrowing memories, but they will be blessed memories, all of them.

I thought when I was trying to prepare a subject for this morning, “All that I have preached for these many years is taken from me and printed, so that I cannot repeat it—what shall I do?” and then this truth came to me, “He shall teach you,” “He shall teach you,” and I begged Him to teach *me* that I might teach *you*. I thought, “Alas, I have had many bright and sparkling thoughts at times, but they do not come just now.” I sat still waiting, and then the fact came to me that the Holy Spirit would bring all things to my remembrance whatsoever the Lord Jesus had said.

I find my natural memory to be less powerful than it used to be in the days of my youth, shall I, therefore, be allowed to forget when I am teaching? No, “He shall teach you, and bring all things to your remembrance.” How beautiful! I have noticed old people whose memories have been sadly feeble. I knew one who forgot his children. But I never knew an old saint yet who forgot the name of the Savior, or failed to remember His love.

Sometimes the Holy Ghost bears such witness in the heart that the memory is very strong about divine things even when it fails about spiritual things. So, my dear old friend, you that the youngsters sometimes amuse themselves with because your memory has got to be like an old sieve that lets everything through, it will not let your Lord through, you will always feel the music of His name. You will never forget your Well-Beloved if you live to be as old as Methuselah. Memory, though it leaves no other name, shall leave that name recorded there.

Christ’s love is not hung upon us like a garland on a tree, but it is cut into us, and as the tree grows the letters grow deeper and broader every day. The Holy Ghost, who is the life of believers, writes more and more clearly upon that life the glorious and blessed name of Jesus. I wish that any here who do not know Christ would cry for the Spirit of God to teach Him to them. If you long to be saved, pray that by His Spirit the Lord Jesus may bring you into the bond of the covenant, for His love’s sake. Amen.

PORTIONS OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—JOHN 14:15-31; 16:1-14.

HYMNS FROM “OUR OWN HYMN BOOK”—152, 455, 458.

Taken from The C. H. Spurgeon Collection, Version 1.0, Ages Software. Only necessary changes have been made, such as correcting spelling errors, some punctuation usage, capitalization of deity pronouns, and minimal updating of a few archaic words. The content is unabridged. Additional Bible-based resources are available at www.spurgeongems.org.